

K Bible and T. Philimon

3

A

PARAPHRASE

AND

NOTES

ON

St. PAUL'S EPISTLE

TO

PHILEMON.

Attempted in

Imitation of Mr. LOCKE's Manner.

WITH AN

APPENDIX;

In which is shewn,

That St. PAUL could neither be an ENTHUSIAST, nor an IMPOSTOR: And consequently, the CHRISTIAN RELIGION must be (as he has represented it) HEAVENLY and DIVINE.

LONDON,

Printed for RICHARD FORD, at the Angel in the Poultry.
M.DCC.XXXI.

Price ONE SHILLING.

A
PARAPHRASE
AND
NOTES
ON
St. PAUL'S EPISTLE
TO
PHILEMON

Adapted in

Imitation of Mr. J. E. Manner



W. L. G. W.

APPENDIX

In which is shown

That St. PAUL could neither be an INFIDEL
nor an IMPOSTOR; And conse-
quently, the CHRISTIAN RELIGION
must be (as he has represented it) HEAVENLY
and DIVINE.

LONDON:
Printed by RICHARD BORD, at the Angel in St. Dun-
stons Church-yard.
MDCCLXXII.
THE ONE SHILLING.

THE
PREFACE.

AS I have great Reason to acknowledge the Assistance which Mr. LOCKE's Paraphrase and Notes upon some of St. PAUL's Epistles, have afforded me, towards understanding that useful, but difficult, part of SACRED SCRIPTURE; so have I often regretted that he did not live to go through all of them.

He has certainly put us into the right Way of studying them, tho' I don't reckon him infallible; for I have by me some Remarks upon Places which I apprehend him to have mistaken; which Remarks may, perhaps, some Time or other see the Light. But, however (though we are all fallible) we ought to learn of one another, and to assist one another, as much as we can; as well as implore the FATHER OF LIGHTS to succeed our Inquiries after Truth, and our Attempts to set it in a just and clear Light.

And the World in general ought to be grateful to the GREAT AND GOOD Mr. LOCKE, for putting them into such a Way of studying St. PAUL's EPISTLES.

'Till some abler Hand shall undertake this useful Service, I have begun to do it as well as I can.

The P R E F A C E.

And as a SPECIMEN I have undertaken the shortest of St. PAUL's Epistles. As 'tis so short in itself, and is now published alone, there are several general Observations upon all his Epistles, which will be only referr'd to in the Notes upon the others, in order to render them proportionably shorter.

Some have looked upon this rather as a familiar Epistle, or a Letter of Friendship, than as an APOSTOLIC Epistle: But whoever looks more narrowly into it, will find it worthy of an inspired Author, and that several of the great Doctrines and Precepts of CHRISTIANITY are either asserted or insinuated.

According to the Reception that this meets with, I shall be able to judge, whether it will be proper for me to go on to publish the two Epistles to the THESSALONIANS, the two Epistles to TIMOTHY, and the Epistle to TITUS, as my Health and Leisure shall allow me to finish them.

A
PARAPHRASE
 AND
NOTES

ON THE
Epistle of St. Paul the Apostle

TO

PHILEMON.

*Written
 from Rome:
 An. Christi
 vulg. 63.
 Neron. 9.
 just before
 St. Paul
 was set at
 Liberty
 from his
 first Con-
 finement
 at Rome.*

The **HISTORY and SYNOPSIS.**

C OLOSSE was a City of PHRYGIA MAJOR, built upon the River LYCUS, and equally distant from LAODICEA on one side, and HIERAPOLIS on the other: There lived PHILEMON, who was very probably a Native of the Country; for PHILEMON was a common Name among the PHRYGIANS.

PHRYGIA was a Nation that was *proverbial* for being of a slavish and untractable Disposition; and if PHILEMON was of so rough a Temper, when provoked (though otherwise a kind and generous Man) it may shew us why St. PAUL labour'd the Point so much, to obtain so small a Request.

That

PHILEMON.

That he lived at COLOSSE, appears from the APOSTLE's calling ONESIMUS one of them, *Colos. iv. 9.* and from his saluting ARCHIPPUS as a Minister at COLOSSE, *Col. iv. 17.* compar'd with *ver. 2.* of this *Epistle*. Nay, THEODORET, in his *Preface* to this *Epistle*, says, that PHILEMON's House remain'd at COLOSSE 'till his Time (and he is reckon'd to have flourish'd towards the Conclusion of the fourth CENTURY) and that it was then kept for the Use of the CHRISTIAN CHURCH there.

PHILEMON seems to have been a Person of Distinction, that had been converted from an IDOLATROUS GENTILE * See Note to CHRISTIANITY, by * St. PAUL himself; not that the APOSTLE had ever been at COLOSSE before his Writing this *Epistle*; but PHILEMON had most probably been converted at EPHESUS, during St. PAUL's long Abode there; for thereby all the Inhabitants of the PROCONSULAR ASIA heard the Word of the Lord both JEWS and GREEKS, or GENTILES, *Acts xix. 10.* compared with *Acts xx. 31.* and who knows but that some of the COLOSSIANS might receive the GOSPEL that way? A more likely Time and Place can hardly be assign'd: And as PHILEMON was himself converted by St. PAUL, he was perhaps one of them that were instrumental in converting the rest of the COLOSSIANS.

This PHILEMON had had a *Slave* called ONESIMUS, that had robb'd him, and then run away from him as far as ROME. How the APOSTLE came to meet with him there is not said; however, there St. PAUL, during his Confinement in his own hired House, converted and baptized him, and kept him for some Time to wait upon himself, till the Truth and Sincerity of his Repentance was confirm'd by his Conduct. And when ONESIMUS was resolved upon returning to his Master again, the APOSTLE writes this *Letter* in his behalf, sending it in his own Name, and in the Name of his beloved TIMOTHY, and by the Hands of TYCHICUS and ONESIMUS; and the chief Design of the *Epistle* was to reconcile PHILEMON to his Slave, and to persuade him to regard, and put as much, or more Confidence in him than ever.

In this *Letter* we have the Picture of a generous Friend, and of a wise and brave Man, a noble Instance of CHRISTIAN Charity, Benevolence, and Condescension! And from the great APOSTLE's Example we ought to learn to do our best to recon-

PHILEMON.

7

reconcile Persons at Difference, and to stoop to the Assistance of the meanest Slave, when and where it lies in our Power.

This *Letter* is wrote with such admirable Address and Affection, and the Request urg'd home so closely, that, methinks, it would be very agreeable to know the Success it met with, even though the Persons concern'd have been so many hundreds of Years in their Graves: I am, indeed, strongly inclin'd to believe, that PHILEMON granted the APOSTLE's Request, and received ONE-SIMUS into his House and Favour again.

SECT. I.

VERSES 1, 2, 3.

The INTRODUCTION.

IN these three Verses he directs the Letter, and salutes the Family he writes to, according to the Custom of those Times, and especially among the CHRISTIANS.

TEXT. PARAPHRASE.

PAUL a Prisoner of **JESUS CHRIST,** and **PAUL** (who is now * under Confinement at ROME for the sake of the

NOTES.

1. * Παῦλος ὁ δεσμώτης τοῦ Χριστοῦ. **PAUL a Prisoner of JESUS CHRIST.]** We have no other Word in ENGLISH to express it by; but the Word PRISONER does not exactly answer the *original* Word, nor St. PAUL's Meaning: His present Confinement was not in a *Prison*, but in his own hired House, *Acts xxviii. 30.* There he had a Soldier always chain'd to him to watch him, and to be with him where-ever he was; the Chain, which was of Iron, was fasten'd to the *Prisoner's* right Hand, and to the *Soldier's* left Arm, but it was of length sufficient for their walking about, and doing other Necessaries or Conveniences. In this Confinement St. PAUL's Friends might have free Recourse to him; and he was permitted, without Molestation, to preach the GOSPEL in his own hired House, to all that would come and hear him.

In as much as there's a remarkable Justness and Propriety in the INTRODUCTION to St. PAUL's Epistles, we shall here consider them at one View, that we may not have Occasion to repeat the Observation, and that their

Senec. de
Tranquil.
c. 10.
Senec. Ep.
5. & 59.
St. August.
in Psal.
cxxxviii.

pecu-

NOTES.

peculiar Suitableness and Propriety may the more evidently appear; and in going over them we shall proceed in the Order in which we apprehend they were wrote.

In his second *Epistle* to the THESSALONIANS, he only prefixes his Name without any Title, because the JUDAIZING CHRISTIANS, and FALSE APOSTLES, had not then begun to make any Opposition to him or his Doctrine, nor were his APOSTOLIC POWER and MISSION as yet called in Question. Into the GALATIAN CHURCHES there had crept (quickly after St. PAUL's Departure) certain JUDAIZING CHRISTIANS, that called in Question his APOSTLESHIP, and insinuated that St. PETER, and the APOSTLES of the CIRCUMCISION were greater APOSTLES, and more to be regarded, than St. PAUL; that he was only an APOSTLE of Man, but they of JESUS CHRIST; that the APOSTLES of the CIRCUMCISION had never preached against circumcising the Converts from among the IDOLATROUS GENTILES; nay, that St. PAUL himself had sometimes preach'd up the Necessity of circumcising such Converts; and therefore upon all Accounts they ought to submit thereto, as absolutely necessary to their Christianity here, and to their Salvation hereafter. As Matters stood thus, 'twas requisite that he should assert his Apostolic Power and Authority, and begin his *Epistle* to them (as he did) PAUL an APOSTLE, *not of Men, neither by Man, but by JESUS CHRIST, and GOD the FATHER, who raised him from the dead, &c.*

After the APOSTLE had been two or three Years at CORINTH, and had in Person planted a considerable Church there, he departed: Not long after which, came a false Apostle, by Nation a JEW, and perhaps of the Sect of the SADDUCEES; he opposed St. PAUL, vilify'd his Person, charg'd him with false Doctrine, and unbecoming Practices; by which vile Arts, and unjust Insinuations, he raised a great Faction against the APOSTLE: He therefore begins his first *Epistle* to the Corinthians with, PAUL called to be an APOSTLE of JESUS CHRIST, and appointed thereto by the Will of GOD, &c. When he wrote his first *Epistle* to Timothy, 'tis evident that certain JUDAIZERS had mixed with the CHURCH at EPHEBUS, and that HYMENEUS and ALEXANDER particularly did oppose Saint PAUL; he therefore introduces that *Epistle* also with asserting his APOSTOLIC Authority, PAUL an APOSTLE of JESUS CHRIST, according to the Commandment (or Appointment) of GOD our Saviour, and of the LORD JESUS CHRIST, who is our Hope, &c. As the FACTION was not intirely broke when he wrote his second *Epistle* to the Corinthians, he begins, PAUL an APOSTLE of JESUS CHRIST, by the Will of GOD, &c.

He was afraid that the GENTILE CHRISTIANS at ROME might be carried too far into JEWISH SENTIMENTS, because they had very probably been converted by some of the JEWISH CHRISTIANS: But as he had never been at ROME himself, and consequently no Opposition had been made to him there, he pitches upon a Medium in his INTRODUCTION to that *Epistle*, neither asserting his APOSTOLIC Power and Authority in so high a Tone, or in so magisterial a Manner, nor yet wholly omitting the mention of it; PAUL the Servant (or Bond-Man) of JESUS CHRIST, called to be an APOSTLE, and separated unto the Gospel of GOD, &c. And through the whole of that EPISTLE to the ROMANS it may be easily

PHILEMON.

9

NOTES.

easily observed, that he speaks in a more mild and condescending Manner, than he generally does in those *Epistles* that are wrote to the CHURCHES, which he himself had planted, especially if there had been any Apostasy from him or his Doctrine: Then he puts on the Air and Tone of a Master, and reproves and rebukes, and exhorts with all Authority. Here he was only afraid that the GENTILE CHRISTIANS at ROME might possibly be led aside by JEWISH Prejudices; and thereto he not only suits his INTRODUCTION, but also in the Body of the *Epistle* he cautions and warns, and exhorts them, not in an authoritative, but in a friendly and affable Manner; and alledges several Reasons why the JEWISH CHRISTIANS ought not to impose such Things upon them, and why the GENTILE CHRISTIANS ought to stand fast in the LIBERTY which CHRISTIANITY allows them.

As to that which commonly goes under the Name of the *Epistle to the EPHESIANS* (and which I think to be the *Epistle to the LAODICEANS*, mention'd *Colos. iv. 16.*) the Persons to whom it was wrote were evidently gone into some JEWISH Sentiments and Practices, being particularly seduced by the pretended Purity of the SECT of the ESSENES; and were, perhaps, in danger of being further seduced: He therefore begins, PAUL an APOSTLE of JESUS CHRIST, by the Will of GOD, &c.

For the same Reason, and about the same Time, he wrote his *Epistle to the COLOSSIANS*, and begins again with the very same Words: And in this latter *Epistle* he order'd both the *Epistles* to be read in both CHURCHES, viz. at LAODICEA and COLOSSE.

During his Confinement at ROME, the generous PHILIPPIANS sent EPA-PHRODITUS with an handsome Present, lest the APOSTLE should want Necessaries in his Confinement: Though they seem to have been but a small CHURCH, yet they were very generous; for besides this sending after him to ROME, they had formerly been kind to him above all the other CHURCHES, and had sent him Presents once and again whilst he was at THESSALONICA. This kind Concern of theirs was gratefully repented by the generous APOSTLE; and in writing unto them, he would not assume his APOSTOLIC Character over such affectionate Friends, and so obedient a CHURCH; nor say any Thing that would intimate his having a Right to such Favours; but introduces that *Epistle*, PAUL and TIMOTHEUS the Servants (or Bond-Men) of JESUS CHRIST, &c.

In this *Epistle to PHILEMON* he intimates, ver. 8, 9. that he chose to lay aside all his APOSTOLIC AUTHORITY, and to beg it as a Favour that he would be reconciled to ONESIMUS; and in order to touch and melt the Heart of PHILEMON, he begins with stiling himself, PAUL the PRISONER of JESUS CHRIST, &c. This Affability and Condescension must be own'd to be a much more friendly and grateful way of Address, than that of Command and Authority.

If St. PAUL was the Author of the *Epistle to the HEBREWS* (as I believe he was) I reckon he did not introduce it with his NAME and APOSTOLIC AUTHORITY, because his very NAME was offensive to the JUDAIZING ZEALOTS, and he was properly the APOSTLE of the GENTILES, *Rom. xi. 13.* He therefore enters immediately upon the Subject of the *Epistle*, without any of his usual INTRODUCTIONS; and argues with them, to raise and exalt their Value for CHRISTIANITY above JUDAISM, as any other BROTHER CHRISTIAN, that was equally inspired, might have done.

PARAPHRASE TEXT.

the Lord JESUS CHRIST, and for preaching the CHRISTIAN DOCTRINE in the World) and TIMOTHY our CHRISTIAN BROTHER, send our Respects, and all proper Salutations, to our dearly beloved Christian Brother PHILEMON of CO-

NOTES.

The CRETANS were far gone into JEWISH SENTIMENTS and PRACTICES, being deluded by some JEWISH CHRISTIANS, who sophisticated the pure CHRISTIAN DOCTRINE, and preached it so mixed, for the Sake of a Maintenance; thereby leading the CHRISTIANS off from the *Simplicity which is in CHRIST JESUS*. St. PAUL therefore begins his *Epistle to TITUS* (whom he himself had sent to CRETE, to rectify such Disorders) with, PAUL the Servant of GOD, and the APOSTLE of JESUS CHRIST, &c.

The last of his *Epistles* was the second to TIMOTHY; wherein he takes notice, that the JUDAIZING CHRISTIANS (probably at EPHESUS, where I suppose TIMOTHY then was) introduc'd several foolish and unlearned Questions into CHRISTIANITY; and that they crept into Houses, and deluded silly Women, that were notoriously corrupted by them. In Opposition to such DECEIVERS (and, perhaps, to add Weight and Dignity to the Ministry of TIMOTHY; and some such Thing he might possibly have also in View in the INTRODUCTION of his *Epistle to TITUS*) he asserts his APOSTLESHIP, and begins, PAUL an APOSTLE of JESUS CHRIST, by the Will of GOD, &c.

Thus have I gone through all his *Epistles*; and must own, that I can't but admire the Propriety and Suitableness of the INTRODUCTIONS of every one of them. Could a Man of such Exactness and Sagacity be easily imposed upon, and fancy that CHRISTIANITY was attested with Signs and Wonders, and divers Miracles, and Gifts of the Holy Ghost, according to the Divine Will; nay, that he himself was possess'd of such miraculous Powers, and supernatural Gifts; yea, and could confer them upon others also by the laying on of his Hands; if all had been Fancy and Delusion? Or, can we suppose, that a Man that gave such convincing Proofs of his Honesty and Integrity, especially by his many and grievous Sufferings, would ever attempt to deceive others?

[TIMOTHY a Brother.] As TIMOTHY had been so long at EPHESUS, which was not far from COLOSSE, it was very proper that he should join with St. PAUL in this Letter; rather, perhaps, than any of them mentioned in the Conclusion of this *Epistle*; for probably he was well known to PHILEMON, and had been active in his Conversion, or Confirmation in the CHRISTIAN FAITH.

The APOSTLE calls TIMOTHY a Brother (and not his Son, as he does elsewhere) possibly to add Weight and Authority by his Name to the present Request.

He

TEXT.

PARAPHRASE.

2 Fellow-Labourer. And to our beloved APPHIA, and AR-

COLOSSE, who is our Fellow-Labourer in spreading and promoting the Christian Religion in the World; and to our beloved Sister APPHIA, together with AR-

2.

3.

NOTES.

He does not, indeed, call TIMOTHY a PRISONER; perhaps he had been so, and was now set at liberty, see *Heb. xiii. 23*. Or, perhaps, he was now confin'd, and the APOSTLE did not see proper to take any Notice of it; which I apprehend was the Case with ARISTARCHUS, who is mentioned here, *v. 24.* and no Notice taken of his being under Confinement, though EPAPHRAS is called the APOSTLE's Fellow-Prisoner in CHRIST JESUS, *ver. 23.* and ARISTARCHUS was so, too, as we learn from the *Epistle to the COLOSSIANS*, which was written and sent at the same Time, and by the same Persons, with this Epistle; see *Coloss. iv. 7—10.* The Appellation of BROTHER was sometimes common to the CHRISTIANS in general; sometimes they were divided into APOSTLES, ELDERS, and BRETHREN, as *Acts xv.* where by APOSTLES I take to be meant such of the Twelve of the Circumcision as were then at JERUSALEM, and BARNABAS and SAUL the Two APOSTLES of the GENTILES; by ELDERS, the rest of the One Hundred and Twenty, upon whom the HOLY GHOST fell down on the famous Day of PENTECOST, *Acts ii.* and who were called ELDERS, because they were some of the most early Converts, being Christians, even before our Lord's Crucifixion: In Allusion to which primary ELDERS in the CHRISTIAN CHURCH, the first, or most intelligent and prudent Converts in any Place, were called and appointed ELDERS, to instruct and preside over particular CHURCHES.

All the other CHRISTIANS, except APOSTLES and ELDERS, went under the Name of BRETHREN; though the APOSTLES sometimes took to themselves the inferior Name of ELDERS, as both they and the ELDERS were sometimes called by the general Name of BRETHREN. See *Miscell. Sacr. Essay II.*

[Our Fellow-Labourer.] Such as lodged or entertained the APOSTLES, or their Messengers, or any of the CHRISTIANS, or in any respect promoted the Spreading of CHRISTIANITY, are called their Fellow-Labourers, whether Men or Women; as in some sort engaged in the honourable Work, *Rom. xvi. 3. 3 John, ver. 8. Matt. x. 41, 42.* PHILEMON is not so much as called an ELDER, though perhaps he (and ONESIMUS also since his Conversion) might have some spiritual Gifts communicated by the laying on of the Hands of the APOSTLE, and so might be able to minister to him in some superior Manner. See *ver. 13.*

2. ^a And to our beloved APPHIA.] The ALEXANDRIAN, and other MSS. read *ἀδελφῆ*, Sister; which must be understood as BROTHER, above, to denote their mutual Relation as CHRISTIANS. She is conjectur'd by some of the FATHERS, and expressly asserted by others, to have been the

PARAPHRASE

TEXT.

3: ARCHIPPUS, who is our Fellow-Soldier under JESUS CHRIST, *the great Captain of our Salvation*, engaged in the same honourable and arduous Undertaking; and finally, 'unto the Church which is in your House; we wish you Favour, and all imaginable Happiness from the great Fountain of all that is good, *i. e.* from GOD the FATHER, *from whom are all Things*; and from the Lord JESUS CHRIST, *by whom are all Things*.

ARCHIPPUS our Fellow-Soldier, and to the CHURCH in thy House. Grace to you, and Peace ³ from GOD our Father, and the Lord JESUS CHRIST.

NOTES.

Wife of PHILEMON; and as she is mentioned before ARCHIPPUS, a Minister of the CHRISTIAN CHURCH at COLOSSE, the Conjecture is not improbable. The APOSTLE writes to her also, that she might use her Intercession in behalf of ONESIMUS.

And to ARCHIPPUS our Fellow-Soldier.] Dr. LIGHTFOOT reckons him to have been the Son of PHILEMON, or at least one that lived in his Family; and therefore he was mentioned upon the same Account as APPHIA. As he was the MINISTER (or, perhaps, the most prudent and active Minister) of the CHRISTIAN CHURCH there, *Colos. iv. 17.* it was proper enough for the APOSTLE to engage his good Offices in this Affair, whether he was PHILEMON's Son, or no.

And to the Church in thy House.] *i. e.* to all the CHRISTIANS in your Family, who daily join together in the Worship of GOD, and have the Promise of CHRIST's favourable Presence and Blessing, *Matt. xviii. 20.* In this Sense all CHRISTIAN Families ought to be a CHURCH in their own House. The Expression occurs, *Rom. xvi. 5. 1 Cor. xvi. 19.* And that St. PAUL did not hereby mean, that the whole CHURCH of COLOSSE assembled at PHILEMON's House, may appear from St. PAUL's saluting the CHURCH in the House of NYMPHAS, which was also at COLOSSE, *Colos. iv. 15.*

The APOSTLE endeavours to gain the good Will of all PHILEMON's Family, and does not call them his *Children* or *Servants*, but by the venerable Name of a CHRISTIAN CHURCH, to give a Dignity and Weight to their Intercession in the Behalf of ONESIMUS.

SECT.

S E C T. II.

VERSE 4—7.

The CONTENTS.

HE does not immediately proceed to the main Subject of this *Epistle*, but (besides the more distant Preparation already taken notice of) he in this SECTION comes nearer the Point; with the most admirable Address, thanking GOD that PHILEMON had been as generous already, and done as much, or more, in other Instances, than what he was now going to request of him: He urges the Man by his own past Example, *q. d. Only continue to act like your self, and then you will do all I desire.* This was certainly a most grateful and insinuating Way of pointing out to PHILEMON his Duty, and the most proper and beautiful *Introduction* to his particular Request.

TEXT. PARAPHRASE.

I Thank my GOD, making mention of thee always in my Prayers; hearing of thy Love and Faith, which

WE † give Thanks unto GOD for that agreeable Account (which we lately received by EPAPHRAS, *Colof. i. 6, 7.*) of the Steadfastness of your Faith in

NOTES.

4. † Εὐχαριστῶ τῷ Θεῷ μου, *I thank my God.*] This Sentence ought to be joined to ver. 5. as Παροῖσι μὲν οὐ παύωμεν ἐν τῷ ᾧ προσευχόμεθα, *Making mention of thee always in my Prayers,* ought to be read at the beginning of ver. 6. See the Paraphrase. Like Expressions are common in the beginning of several of his *Epistles*, *Rom.* i. 8, 9, 10. *Eph.* i. 16. *Philip.* xiii. 4. *Colos.* 1. 3. 1 *Thes.* i. 2. & iii. 9, 10. 2 *Thes.* i. 3.

5. ² *Axiom, &c. Hearing of thy Love and Faith.*] Here is almost the same Manner of Expression used to PHILEMON, whom St. PAUL had converted, which he used *Ephes. i. 15.* from which Text in *Ephesians* some of the CRITICKS have argued, that that was the EPISTLE to the LAODICEANS, mention'd *Colos. iv. 16.* He does indeed use the same Manner of speaking, *Colos. i. 4.* whereas the COLOSSIANS had then never seen the APOSTLE, *Col. ii. 1.* May we therefore hence conclude, that St. PAUL did not in Person convert PHILEMON, but had only sent him some of his Attendants; and so could tell PHILEMON, *ver. 19. That he ow'd unto him even his own self;* his very Soul, and his Hopes of eternal Salvation, because the Gospel Doctrine

PARAPHRASE. TEXT.

in JESUS CHRIST, and Practice of which thou hast toward the CHRISTIAN DOCTRINE, and the Lord JESUS, of your great Love to all the Christians: For this we frequently praise GOD, and toward all Saints; at the same Time making it our earnest that

Re-

NOTES.

came from the APOSTLE to PHILEMON, though mediately? I confess, I rather incline to think, that St. PAUL himself converted PHILEMON; and that it could not have been concluded from that Expression alone, of the APOSTLE's bearing of their Faith, &c. *Ephes. i. 15.* that he had never seen the Persons to whom he was then writing, unless it were back'd with other and stronger Arguments, such as his questioning, whether they had ever heard of his being the APOSTLE of the GENTILES, *Ephes. iii. 2.* &c. and his never hinting, through the whole Epistle, at his long stay at EPHESUS, nor at the Doctrine which he had taught them, nor at the Treatment which he had there met with.

ἡ τοῦ ἀγαπᾶν, καὶ τὴν πίστιν ἣν ἔχουσιν πρὸς τὸν κύριον Ἰησοῦν, καὶ εἰς πάντας τοὺς ἁγίους.
Thy Love and Faith which thou hast towards the Lord JESUS CHRIST, and towards all Saints.] Dr. MILLS mentions several MSS. and ancient VERSIONS, that place the Words thus, *καὶ εἰς πάντας τοὺς ἁγίους, καὶ τὴν πίστιν ἣν ἔχουσιν πρὸς τὸν κύριον Ἰησοῦν*, Thy Faith and Love, &c. which was, most probably, the original Reading, as FAITH refers to the Lord JESUS CHRIST, and LOVE to the SAINTS. Besides, this is the Order in which St. PAUL commonly placed these very Words, *Eph. i. 15. Colos. i. 4.* which two Epistles were wrote at the same Time; and whilst the same Thoughts were fresh and warm in his Mind, no wonder if he run into the same or like Expressions. But when the Words are thus placed, they will require such a Trajection as we took notice of, *ver. 4.* as appears from the two Texts last quoted.

ἁγίους, Saints.] Those Titles of Saints, an holy People, a chosen Nation, an holy Seed, the Elect, the Called, the faithful Brethren, the Sanctify'd, the People of GOD, and the holy and beloved; with a Variety of Appellations of like Import, which abound in the APOSTOLIC EPISTLES, were formerly used in speaking of the Nation of the JEWS, which was the only Nation free from Idolatry, and therefore the LORD was their GOD, and the other NATIONS had chosen other GODS, which were IDOLS and false GODS. Upon the Coming of the MESSIAH, such of the JEWISH NATION, as refused to believe and obey him, were rejected; but these Titles were continued to all such JEWS as embraced CHRISTIANITY, and their Privileges increased; and not only such JEWS, but the GENTILES also, upon embracing CHRISTIANITY, shared equally in these Titles, and in all the Privileges of the chosen People of GOD; and nothing but their own Wickedness or Apostasy could cut them off from such Honours and Advantages. See *Rom. i. 6. 1 Cor. i. 2. 2 Cor. i. 1. Eph. i. 1. Philip. i. 1. Col. i. 2. & passim.*

TEXT.

PARAPHRASE.

- 6 that the Communication of thy Faith may become effectual, Request to GOD, that your partaking in the common Faith may not be in vain, but that it may influence your own Heart, and become evident to the World around you, 6.

NOTES.

6. ¹Ὁμοίως ἡ κοινωμία τῆς πίστεως σε ἐνεργεῖς συνίαι ἐν ἐαυτῷ κατὰ ἀγαθὸν ἔστι σοὶ εἰς Χριστὸν Ἰησοῦν. *That the Communication of thy Faith may become effectual by the Acknowledgment of every good Thing which is in you in Christ Jesus.* Not only our ENGLISH, but all the literal TRANSLATIONS that I have seen, appear to be very perplexed. In order to make the Verse as plain and easy as we can, we will first consider the several Expressions, and then join them; ἡ κοινωμία τῆς πίστεως σε, *The Communication of thy Faith*; which is not to be understood of his communicating, or imparting, the CHRISTIAN FAITH to others, but of his partaking of it himself. When κοινωμία (or the Verb κοινωμέω) signifies imparting something to others, 'tis used with a *Dative Case* after it, as Rom. xii. 13. Gal. vi. 6. or with an *Accusative Case* with the Preposition ἐν before it, as Rom. xv. 26. 2 Cor. viii. 4. and ix. 13. Philip. i. 5. But when it signifies the *partaking or sharing in any Thing in common with others* (as it does here) it has always a *Genitive Case* after it, as 1 Cor. i. 9. Eph. iii. 9. Phil. ii. 1. and iii. 10. To the same Purpose are the following Expressions, *the common Salvation*, Jude, ver. 3. and *the common Faith*, Titus i. 10. intimating, that all CHRISTIANS partake of them. So St. PAUL (mentioning CHRISTIANS in general) calls JESUS CHRIST both their LORD, and ours, 1 Cor. i. 2. In this common LORD, common Salvation, and common Faith, PHILEMON had a Share as well as other CHRISTIANS.

Ενεργεῖς, effectual. One MSS. and several old VERSIONS, read ἐνέργει, *evident*, which was probably the original Reading. Though it is not material which of the two Ways we read, as the Sense of both comes to the same Thing; and as St. PAUL does elsewhere speak of Faith which worketh by Love, Gal. v. 6.

Εν ἐαυτῷ κατὰ ἀγαθὸν ἔστι σοὶ, *by the Acknowledgment of every good Thing which is in you.* Ενεργεῖς has here the Force of the Hebrew Conjugation, *HIPIL*, and does not signify Knowledge, but to make known; σοὶ I apprehend is put for σε, and κατὰ ἀγαθὸν, every good Thing, is to be understood of PHILEMON's holy Principles, and virtuous and benevolent Dispositions. This internal Goodness in PHILEMON was to be made manifest by his holy Life and charitable Conduct; for the Way for Men to shew that they have Faith is by their good Works, James ii. 18. Mat. v. 16.

Εἰς Χριστὸν Ἰησοῦν, *In CHRIST JESUS.* It ought (I think) rather to have been translated, *towards CHRIST JESUS*. GROTIUS is, indeed, for having a Trajection of the Words (and two such Instances we have already taken Notice of, in the Notes upon Verses 4. and 5.) and that in JESUS CHRIST, ought to be join'd with the Word Faith, in the beginning of the Verse, which would then run thus, *That your partaking of Faith in JESUS CHRIST,*

Ec.

PARAPHRASE TEXT.

- you, by your exerting all those holy and good Principles and Dispositions which are planted in you, to the Praise and Glory of JESUS CHRIST, the great Author and Founder of that HOLY RELIGION which you profess, and to the Spreading and Advancement of CHRISTIANITY in the World: For 'tis no small Joy and Comfort to us in our present Confinement, to hear of your great Love and Beneficence to the CHRISTIANS, and how much the Bowels of many of them are refreshed by you, BROTHER!

NOTES.

Ec. and this is no improbable *Trajection*; but I rather prefer that Sense express'd in the PARAPHRASE, viz. towards JESUS CHRIST; or, that PHILEMON's Faith was to produce good Works, in Imitation of, and Obedience to, the Lord JESUS CHRIST, and to the Praise and Glory of that great Founder of our HOLY RELIGION, who hath by his Doctrine represented an HOLY LIFE as the proper and genuine Consequence of sincere Repentance, unfeigned Faith and Love; has bound it upon us by his own Example and Commands, has declared it to be one of the indispensable Terms of Acceptance with GOD; nay, has purchased it at our Hands, by his great Love manifested in dying for us, and to whose Honour and Glory all the Virtue and Piety, Goodness and Charity, of his Disciples do evidently redound.

Having consider'd the several Expressions singly, instead of summing them up here, I refer you to the PARAPHRASE.

7. *The Bowels of the Saints are refresh'd by you, Brother.* If the COLOSSIANS did send the APOSTLE a Present, in that his first Confinement at ROME, by the Hands of EPAPHRAS (as some have conjectured from what St. PAUL has said, *Colos. i. 8.* of EPAPHRAS's declaring unto him their Love in the Spirit) 'tis probable that PHILEMON might contribute largely thereto. Though, I confess, I do not believe that any such Present was sent, for St. PAUL used not to pass over such a Circumstance, without the most express Mention, and the most grateful Acknowledgment.

One or two COMMENTATORS have quoted these two elegant Lines out of VIRGIL, to shew the Beauty of that Expression, *The Bowels of the Saints are refreshed.*

*Quale sopor fessis in Gramine, quale per Æstum
Dulcis Aquæ saliente sitim restinguere Rivo.*

S E C T. III.

V E R S E 8—22.

The C O N T E N T S.

AFTER all this Preparation, he now comes to the main Subject of this *Epistle*; which was, to request PHILEMON to take his Slave ONESIMUS into his Favour, Family, and Service again; though he had robb'd him, and run away from him.

The main Argument which he urges, is, that he had converted ONESIMUS to the CHRISTIAN RELIGION, and therefore he would prove another Sort of a Servant than he had formerly been.

Such softness of Expression, warmth of Affection, and elegance of Address, are here made use of, as are very beautiful and uncommon.

T E X T. P A R A P H R A S E

8. **W**herefore though I might be much bold in CHRIST, to injoin thee that which is convenient, yet **A**s therefore you are already so very generous and benevolent towards all the Disciples of my great LORD and MASTER, I will not make use of my APOSTOLIC Authority (which I have

N O T E S.

8. "Wherefore though I might be much bold in CHRIST, &c."] How handsomely does St. PAUL point out the Authority, which he would not make use of upon this Occasion? By an oblique Method he intimates, that he was an OLD MAN, and a COMMISSIONED APOSTLE; that he had received Power from the Lord JESUS CHRIST to command Obedience, and to revenge all Disobedience: But though he could have back'd his Arguments with Authority, yet he gracefully lets PHILEMON see, that he'll drop that more harsh way of Address, and rather make use of only friendly Admonitions or Intreaties. How uniformly does the APOSTLE keep up to the Character which he had assumed, *ver. 1.* when he stiled himself a *Prisoner*? It was not for a *Prisoner* to assume Authority, and to use a commanding Style, how well soever it might have become an AGED APOSTLE!

PARAPHRASE TEXT.

have received from the Lord JESUS CHRIST, and could make use of, if I pleased) to prescribe to you what is fit and proper; but out of a particular Affection for you, I chuse rather to apply to your benevolent Temper, and to intreat you as a Friend; and that not only by that Regard which you have for the CHRISTIANS in general, but more especially by the Affection which you have formerly expressed towards me PAUL in particular: And when you consider my Circumstances (I am satisfy'd) you will be the more ready to gratify me; for 'tis

yet for Love's sake I rather beseech thee, being such a one

NOTES.

9. ° Being such a one as PAUL, the Aged, and now also a Prisoner of JESUS CHRIST.] q. d. Consider with thy self who 'tis that begs this Favour, 'tis PAUL, a Name that once sounded pleasant in your Ears, and a Person highly in your Favour; that very APOSTLE of the GENTILES, that has travelled by Sea and Land, and through numberless Discouragements and hard Treatment from an ungrateful and wicked World, and all for his Attempts to make them wise and good; to whom you and yours (as well as many Thousands) owe their very Souls, and whose very Name may carry the Force of a powerful Motive in it.

PAUL the AGED.] H. St. PAUL was above thirty Years of Age when he was converted, he must now have been about sixty. He had, when he wrote this Epistle, labour'd about twenty eight Years in spreading the everlasting GOSPEL, first as a PROPHET, and then as an APOSTLE; and what from the Feebleness of his Constitution, his Anxiety and Care for all the CHURCHES; his Fatigues in Travelling; the Hunger, and Cold, and Nakedness, and Bufferings; the Bruises, Aches, and Sores, of his being imprison'd, scourg'd, beaten, and ston'd, he might well be accounted an old Man at sixty: Having obtain'd remarkable Help from GOD, he continued till this Time; but (considering all Things) 'twas a Wonder that he was now alive! How moving is the Argument, couch'd in this and the following Words? q. d. Consider your Petitioner, not only as PAUL, but as PAUL the AGED; as one that has spent a great Part of his Life in the Cause of GOD and RELIGION, and has suffer'd much to promote Truth and Virtue among Men; and, as one now grown old in the Service of my great LORD and MASTER!

He could not so emphatically call himself an ELDER before, because he was not converted to CHRISTIANITY till some Time after our Lord's Ascension, like one born out of due Time: But now that he had been almost thirty Years engaged

TEXT. PARAPHRASE.

one as PAUL the AGED,
and now also a *Prisoner* of
10 JESUS CHRIST. I
beseech thee for my Son
ONESIMUS, whom I
have

not only your Friend PAUL that makes
this Request, but 'tis your aged Friend,
who under the Burden and Infirmities of
old Age is also in Confinement and Bonds,
and that for the Sake of the Lord JESUS
CHRIST, and upon the Account of
propagating that holy and excellent Reli-
gion, in which I had the Pleasure of initi-
ating and instructing you, and which (I
know) you heartily credit, and carefully
practise. And my Request at present is 10.
for ONESIMUS, my Son in the
CHRISTIAN FAITH; for I have
con-

NOTES.

engaged in the glorious Work of making Men wise and good, he assumes the
Title of an ELDER, or AGED-CHRISTIAN. Age is honourable, and
the Aged may command as FATHERS, and need not intreat as CHILDREN.

Besides, the Decays and Infirmities of OLD AGE claim the Compassion of
Mankind, and ought to make Men ready to gratify them in any reasonable Request.
But though OLD AGE is honourable, especially in so Good and so Great a
Man; and the Infirmities of AGE call for Pity and Compassion; yet he has still
more to add to melt the Heart of PHILEMON, *i. e.* This good, this véné-
rable old Man, was labouring at once under the Decays of Nature, and the Hard-
ships of Chains and Confinement. And, for what was he apprehended and con-
fined? Not for any Crime or Wickedness, but merely out of Envy and Prejudice,
and because of his uncommon Goodness; and the Person, for whose sake he was
now under Confinement, was none other than the Lord JESUS CHRIST.
Every Word carries in it the Force of an Argument; PHILEMON's Love to
the Person of PAUL, his Regard for his Authority, his Reverence for his old
Age, his Compassion for his Infirmities and Bonds, and his Love and Subjection
to the Lord JESUS CHRIST, are all comprehended in this one short Sen-
tence. Sure, such a Conjunction of most affecting Arguments laid so closely toge-
ther, must draw Tears into PHILEMON's Eyes, and force him to lay down the
Letter, and give a vent to the Fulness of his Heart, before he could read any further.

If the APOSTLE's Friends had forsaken him, after he had spent, and was
spent, for their sakes; if his great Lord and Master had been slighted; and a
professed CHRISTIAN, and an old Friend, had been implacable; and all this
had come upon him in his old Age, and in his Chains and Confinement, it might
have gone nigh to have broke the Heart of the great APOSTLE, and good
old Man.

10. P ONESIMUS.] He would not so much as mention ONESIMUS's
Name, till he had duly prepared the Mind of PHILEMON for it; and when

PARAPHRASE

TEXT

11. converted him in my ^{old} Confinement. He have begotten in my Bonds: Which in Time past was, ^{to thee} was formerly an unprofitable Slave of ^{to thee} unprofitable; but ^{now} yours. ^{ON ESIMUS} whom I have

NOTES

he does mention him, 'tis not by adding SLAVE, THIEF, and RUN-AWAY; but he's called the APOSTLE's genuine SON in the Faith, his Heart and Bowels, and PHILEMON's BROTHER CHRISTIAN. He mentions him, as if the bare Name would have exasperated PHILEMON; but, as hoping that with all these additional Titles and Circumstances, he would shew him all proper Regard, and that ONESIMUS might appear to be worthy for whom PHILEMON should do all this.

He's called the APOSTLE's Son, *i. e.* By Conversion, as CONVERSION it self is, called REGENERATION, and, *a being born again by Water, and by the Spirit and Word of GOD.* In this beautiful Manner is the great Change, from a wicked, to a spiritual and holy Life, represented in HOLY SCRIPTURE. A converted Person is not the same Man he was before, but another, a new Man; as if he had died, and been born a second Time, or wholly made a new.

Whom I have begotten in my Bonds. This was a particular Indearment of ONESIMUS to the APOSTLE; he was the Son of his old Age, and the Child of his Sorrows and Afflictions; and therefore he might be allowed to plead more affectionately for him. Besides, it gave him a fresh Occasion to mention his BONDS, the Sense and Remembrance of which he was willing to impress strongly upon the Mind of PHILEMON.

As we have consider'd the different INTRODUCTIONS to his EPISTLES, which are remarkably suitable to the State and Circumstances of the several CHURCHES. (*See Note* *, ver. 1.) we here propose, in the same Manner, to consider that Propriety which is observable in the Mention which the APOSTLE makes of his BONDS and IMPRISONMENT. When he took his final and solemn Leave of the ELDERS of EPHESUS, among whom he foresaw that false Prophets and wicked Men would arise to pervert the CHRISTIANS, he mentions the BONDS and Afflictions, that were likely to befall him where-ever he went, *Acts xx. 23.* in order to affect their Hearts, and to keep them steady to the Doctrine which he had taught them.

In his Apology for himself, and for CHRISTIANITY, before King AGRIPPA, how handsomely, and in what an affecting Manner, does he mention his BONDS? *Acts xxvi. 29.* wishing most pathetically, that not only the KING, but all there present, were not only almost, but altogether, such as he himself, except the Misery and Disgrace of the BONDS, wherewith his Hands were then chain'd! Which was a Proof of his great Benevolence to Mankind; as his suffering in Chains, and under such Confinement, were plain Proofs of his Integrity.

With the same View did he mention his CONFINEMENT, to the JEWS at ROME, *Acts xxviii. 17.*

And in the *Epistles* which he wrote to several CHRISTIAN CHURCHES, he frequently took notice of his Sufferings; and had the Skill and Address to make

make even his Afflictions and Persecutions to turn to the Furtherance of the Gospel and the Good of Mankind. The most remarkable Instance of which is, 2 Cor. xi. 23. &c. and among these uncommon Sufferings, he takes notice, that he had been in Prisons more frequently, even though that was before this his first Confinement at ROME.

In his *Epistles* wrote during this Confinement, he hardly ever omits the mention of them; though commonly in an oblique Manner, as here in the Text. *Eph. iii. 1. I PAUL, the PRISONER of CHRIST for you Gentiles.* *Eph. iv. 1. I therefore the PRISONER of the LORD beseech you, &c.* *Eph. vi. 20. For making known the Mystery of the Gospel, I am an AMBASSADOR in BONDS, i. e. for preaching that the Gentiles were to be received into the CHURCH without first becoming PROSELYTES of RIGHTEOUSNESS, Acts xxi. 27, 28.*

When he wrote his *Epistle* to the generous and affectionate PHILIPPIANS, he does, indeed, once and again mention his BONDS; but 'tis always in such a Manner as tended rather to comfort, than to melt or grieve them. *Phil. i. 7.* he mentions his BONDS to enhance the Kindness which the PHILIPPIANS had shown him; as a Kindness in a Time of Distress is a double Kindness. *Phil. i. 13, 14.* he mentions his BONDS again; but 'tis to shew of what vast Service they had been towards the promoting the Cause of CHRISTIANITY at ROME. And, *ver. 16.* he mentions his BONDS again, to insinuate how kind and generous their Conduct had been towards him, when compared with the Conduct of some other professed CHRISTIANS.

But he never desires the PHILIPPIANS to remember his BONDS, as he does in writing to some other CHURCHES; no, they had already been so generous, and so compassionate, as that he would not say any Thing that should look like exciting them to any further, or higher, Degrees of Kindness and Sympathy.

In writing to the COLOSSIANS, who had swerv'd from the Truth, and had been led aside by the JUDAIZING SEDUCERS, he not only says, *Col. iv. 3.* that he was in BONDS for preaching the GOSPEL to the GENTILES; but *ver. 18.* he bids them remember his BONDS; i. e. "Sympathize with me, Pray for me, Stand fast in that Liberty which I have asserted for you even unto BONDS, and consider my Sufferings as such Proofs of my Sincerity, as the false Apostles, who seduce you, can't appeal to."

In this short *Epistle* to PHILEMON, he mentions his BONDS and IMPRISONMENT no less than five Times, that he might affect the Heart of PHILEMON, and melt him to a Compliance.

As the HEBREW CHRISTIANS were in such imminent Danger of APOSTASY, he puts them in mind of his former BONDS, and of their then sympathizing with him; in order to preserve them steadfast to what they had once profess'd, *Heb. x. 34.* And to move the EPHESIANS to adhere to him, and to beware of Seducers, he mentions his BONDS and IMPRISONMENT, 2 *Tim. i. 8.* and *ii. 9.* as he had done formerly to their ELDERS, when he took his Leave of them at MILETUS. In all which Places the Manner of his mentioning his BONDS or Confinement, is remarkably just and proper. Another Proof that St. PAUL was a Man of great Sagacity and Exactness, and no deluded Visionary! As the Sufferings themselves were plain Proofs of his Veracity.

PARAPHRASE. TEXT.

- yours; but ' since he's become a CHRISTIAN, he has seen his Folly, and has so behav'd himself for some Time past, as to do me a great deal of Service; and I do not in the least doubt, but that he will be so faithful and diligent as to please and satisfy you also, if ever he be admitted into
12. your House and Favour again. As I have kept him with me long enough to have had sufficient Proofs of his Repentance, I have sent him back to you, and this Letter along with him, to beg of you to receive him with as hearty a ' Welcome, as you would your sincerely affectionate and
13. beloved Friend, PAUL. I would not, in-

now profitable to thee and to me: Whom I have sent again: Thou therefore receive him that is mine own Bowels. Whom I would have

NOTES.

11. ' *But now profitable to thee and me.*] How quickly, and in what general Expressions, does he pass over the mention of ONESIMUS's Faults, that PHILEMON might not dwell upon them, till he was incensed at the Remembrance! But he takes care to repeat the affectionate and honourable mention of him, and insists very particularly upon his Repentance and Reformation:

Col. iv. 9. He was now a better Man, would be a better Servant, would wrong his Master no more, nor run away any more. If PHILEMON had had a Regard to nothing else, Self-Interest would have inclin'd him to attend to such Arguments.

The Apostle does not directly take notice of it; but it certainly was a strong Proof of ONESIMUS's Repentance, that he return'd to his Master again, not in Chains, or in the Custody of Soldiers or Officers of Justice; but voluntarily, and drawn only by the Cords of Love, and in the Bonds of the Gospel; even though it was in his Master's Power to have put him to Death for a Fugitive.

12. ' *Receive him, that is mine own Bowels.*] SCIPIO GENTILIS has endeavoured to shew, that this *Epistle* has several of the Beauties which shine in DEMOSTHENES and TULLY, and which the *Criticks*, ARISTOTLE and LONGINUS, have admired and celebrated in the antient POETS and ORATORS. If this Observation be found to be just, we may suppose that they flow'd from St. PAUL's real Concern, and hearty Affection; whereas the others work'd themselves up to Warmth in many Cases, where they had no real or any great Concern; and, there is something in natural Affection, which 'tis hard for any Art to imitate. Or, may we suppose PHILEMON (as he seems to have been a Person of Distinction) to have been a Man of Letters; and that the APOSTLE (who had, perhaps, been bred up in the Schools of TARSAUS, before he sat at the Feet of GAMALIEL, and who appears to have been well read in the GREEK POETS) might so far become all Things

TEXT. PARAPHRASE.

have retained with me, that in thy stead he might have minitred unto me in the
14 Bonds of the Gospel. But without thy Mind would

indeed, have sent him at all, but have retain'd him here at ROME, that in the stead of you and other CHRISTIANS, he might have assisted me in spreading the EVERLASTING GOSPEL, whilst I am under my present Confinement. But 14.
as his Service is due to you, I did not know.

NOTES.

to all Men, as towards the learned to behave like a Man of Learning, though among the rude and unlearn'd he laid aside all *Excellence of Speech*, as well as the sublimer Doctrines of CHRISTIANITY, and fed them with Milk, i. e. with the greatest Plainness and Simplicity both of Speech and Doctrine: To this Purpose compare the following Texts, 1 Cor. ii. 1, 4. and iii. 1, 2, 3. and 1 Cor. ix. 19—23.

[*Mine own Bowels.*] Or, as a Son proceeding out of my own Bowels, as a Piece of my self, as Bone of my Bone, and Flesh of my Flesh; which he expresses thus, ver. 17. *As my self*; or, as my very self. There's that in CHRISTIANITY that so far throws down all Distinctions, as to set equally good Men upon a Level; for so they are in the Favour of GOD, and in the Account of RELIGION. A SLAVE, upon becoming a virtuous and good Man, is the Friend, the Brother, the Soul, the Heart, the Bowels, nay, the very Self of the great APOSTLE of the GENTILES. This is a virtuous and religious Brotherhood, which has a different Foundation from the temporal and common Distinctions of Mankind.

How graceful is St. PAUL's Manner of Condescension! He had before laid aside all his APOSTOLIC AUTHORITY, and intreats PHILEMON as a Friend; he now humbles himself to a Level with ONESIMUS, to exalt ONESIMUS's Character, and to intimate the Dignity of the Person for whom he was petitioning.

With what Ardency and Sincerity does he serve his Friend, and so strenuously plead his Cause, as one that would take no Denial, adding Motive to Motive, though in the most concise and elegant Manner!

13. *That in thy stead, &c.*] St. PAUL hints once and again, as if he thought it the Duty of all CHRISTIANS to minister unto him in Temporals or Spirituals, according to their several Abilities, or some way to assist him; whilst he was concern'd in spreading the EVERLASTING GOSPEL, 1 Cor. xvi. 17. Phil. ii. 30. See Note ^c, ver. 1.

14. *But without thy Mind, or Consent, would I do nothing.*] We may here observe, what runs through the whole Scheme of the CHRISTIAN DOCTRINE, viz. That CHRISTIANITY alters nothing in Mens civil Duties or Privileges; 'tis no such levelling Doctrine, as to confound the Distinctions of Mankind, to rob them of their just Rights and Privileges, or to absolve them from any Part of their Duty. PHILEMON was his rightful Master, and ONESIMUS his Slave still; the Right of the one, and the Duty of the other,

PARAPHRASE

TEXT.

- know how you might have taken it, if you had heard of it, and I was unwilling to run the Hazard of displeasing you; for I would gladly have ALL the GOOD which you do to be unconstrain'd, and Matter of free Choice, and particularly the Favour which you shew to ONESIMUS. I can't wholly excuse the Manner in which he left you; but this I can say, That by the Favour of a kind Providence, his "short Departure from you has proved the

I do nothing; that thy Benefit should not be as it were of Necessity, but willingly. For perhaps he therefore departed for a Season, that thou

NOTES.

was not cancell'd by ONESIMUS's Conversion. A JEW was to continue to observe the JEWISH Law, as his Civil or National Law, and a ROMAN the ROMAN Law; though CHRISTIANITY was to both of them the Method of Justification before GOD. A Bondman was still a Bondman, and a Freeman still free. The APOSTLE would not keep PHILEMON's Slave from him, even now he was a CHRISTIAN, nor could ONESIMUS upon that Account claim his Freedom; though if his Master would have been so kind as to have granted him his Freedom, his CHRISTIANITY would not in the least have debarr'd ONESIMUS from accepting of it. See to this purpose, *Luke xii. 13, 14. Rom. xiii. 1, &c. Eph. vi. 1—9. Col. iii. 18. iv. 1. 1 Tim. vi. 1, 2. Tit. ii. 9, 10. 1 Pet. ii. 15—18. 1 Pet. iii. 1.* And, indeed, nothing could have tended more to the Prejudice of CHRISTIANITY, nor made Men more ready to suspect the APOSTLES of some sinister Design, than if they had absolved Servants from their Duty to their Masters, or Subjects from their Duty to their Sovereign; or, on the other hand, ty'd Men down to Slavery, or robb'd them of any of their just Liberties, Possessions, or Privileges.

[*Not of Necessity, but willingly.*] The Doctrine and Practice of forcing Men to be religious by Persecution, or Reproaches, and hard Censures, was disagreeable to PAUL, the CHRISTIAN, and the APOSTLE, how well soever it might be approved of by SAUL the blind and zealous Pharisee. CHRISTIANITY, where 'tis heartily embraced, not only informs the Judgment, but sweetens the Temper, and tends much to render Men more placid and benign to others in their Behaviour, as well as more candid and charitable in their judging.

15. "For perhaps he therefore departed for a Season, that thou shouldst receive him for ever."] As the Event had been so happy, he here ascribes it to the PROVIDENCE of GOD. GOD, in his WISE PROVIDENCE had sent ONESIMUS to ROME to be made a CHRISTIAN and a better Man, that he might be an Instance of the Power that CHRISTIANITY has to make the worst of Men virtuous and useful, and that he might minister

TEXT.

PARAPHRASE.

thou shouldst receive him
16 for ever; Not now as a
Servant, but above a Ser-
vant,

the happy Occasion of making him a bet-
ter Man, and of his returning to you " for
Life, to be more faithful and serviceable
than ever. * I would therefore, now he 16.
is a CHRISTIAN, have you look upon
him no longer as a Slave, but as one above

NOTES.

minister to, and comfort the APOSTLE, in his Confinement; and finally, re-
turn to his Master a better Servant than ever.

*It was the LORD's Doings, and not Man's, and therefore PHILEMON
could not be angry, unless he had a mind to quarrel with the PROVIDENCE
of GOD. Thus JOSEPH ascribes his going into EGYPT to the DI-
VINE PROVIDENCE, though it had been occasion'd by the Malice and
Treachery of his BRETHREN, Gen. xlv. 5. Now therefore be not ye grieved
(says he) nor angry with your selves, that ye sold me hither; for GOD did send
me before you to preserve Life.*

The PROVIDENCE of GOD does often bring Good out of Evil,
though Men ought not therefore to do Evil that Good may come.

But, besides the APOSTLE's ascribing this Event to PROVIDENCE,
his tender manner of expressing it deserves to be taken notice of, *ἴσως, perhaps,*
as if he had scarcely been sure whether ONESIMUS had fraudulently left his
Master or no. *Ἐξωλεῖται, he was separated, or, he departed;* he does not say, *he
run away, or absconded like a Criminal,* but, *perhaps he departed, ἵνα ἴδω,*
for an Hour; for so short a Space that one can hardly deem him a Fugitive;
especially, as he return'd voluntarily, and so much improv'd.

ἢ Ἀσπίδος, for ever.] Here is one Instance where the Phrase, *for ever,* must
stand for a finite, or an indefinite Duration; as indeed the SCRIPTURE com-
monly uses Words in a popular Sense, though it will not hence follow that they
are always so used.

Some fancy that St. PAUL (who had his Head full of JEWISH Learning)
does here refer to the Case of the Hebrew Servant, *Exod. xxi. 2, 6.* who might
have had his Liberty in the seventh Year, if he had so pleased; but if he chose
to continue with his Master, he was to have his Ear bored through unto the Door-
post, and so was bound to serve *for ever*; which *for ever* is thought to have lasted
only to the Year of JUBILEE, if he had so long liv'd, *Lev. xxv. 39, 40, 41.*
But perhaps, as he was writing to a GENTILE Master about a GENTILE
Servant, he might rather have his Eye upon the Case of the GENTILE Ser-
vants bought by the ISRAELITES, which were to be as an Inheritance
to descend to their Children after them, and to be their Bond-men *for ever*,
which could only be for the Life of the Slave, at the furthest.

16. * *Not now as a Servant, but above a Servant, &c.]* *Ἀλλῶν,* we render it
a Servant, but it more properly were render'd a Slave, for such their Servants
were, whether born in their House, or bought with their Money. They did not
receive Wages, nor had they a Power of hiring themselves to other Masters; no,
they were look'd upon as part of their Master's Goods and Possessions; and con-
sidering

PARAPHRASE

TEXT.

a Slave, as a CHRISTIAN BROTHER, very much in my Favour, and (one may reasonably presume) much more in your Favour, as he was originally a GENTILE as well as you, and one of your own Domesticks, that will for the future be a faithful and affectionate Servant, as well as a Brother CHRISTIAN. 17. If therefore you ever had any

vant, a Brother beloved, especially to me; but how much more unto thee, both in the Flesh, and in the LORD? If thou count me 17 there-

NOTES.

considering the great Power that Masters in the Roman Empire had over their Slaves, which extended even to the taking away of their Lives, no wonder the APOSTLE pleads so heartily for ONESIMUS. How far 'tis lawful or unlawful for Men to buy or sell Men, or make them Slaves, CHRISTIANITY decides not, any more than it decided how far the usurped Power of the CÆSARS (and particularly the Tyranny of NERO) was lawful. If it was before unjust and unreasonable to make Men Slaves, CHRISTIANITY does not recommend it, nor tie Slaves down from retrieving their just Liberties and Privileges. If it was a Thing just and right in it self, CHRISTIANITY does not condemn it; but as to civil Rights or Duties, in general, it leaves Men just where it found them, and binds them only as to RELIGION, or in Matters between GOD and their own Conscience. For this Reason it was, that when one would have had ~~him~~ to have divided an Estate between him and his Brother (as thinking, perhaps, that our LORD's Justice and Authority would do him right) JESUS said unto him, Man, who made me a Judge, or a Divider over you? Luke xii. 13, 14. To which purpose he declared more generally before PILATE, That his Kingdom was not of this World. See Note 1, ver. 14.

Above a Servant, a Brother beloved, &c.] How far the APOSTLE might here design to intimate, that PHILEMON would do well to grant ONESIMUS his Freedom, I know not. Some have laid more stress upon this than it appears to me to have. However, I have shewn above, that St. PAUL, by recommending him as *above a Servant, and as a Brother*, can't be understood to have claimed his Freedom as a Matter of Right; he therefore could only recommend him as a CHRISTIAN BROTHER. GOD has made of one Blood all Nations of Men that dwell upon the Face of the Earth; and CHRISTIANS are likewise all united in CHRIST JESUS, their common Head and LORD. In this religious Brotherhood there's neither JEW nor GENTILE, Male nor Female, Bond nor Free; no Difference put between one Person and another, but if equally Holy, they are equally acceptable in the Sight of GOD. *Matt. xxiii. 8.* The meanest Slave has a Soul to be saved, and the meanest CHRISTIAN ought to be regarded as a Brother, as well as CHRISTIANS in superior Stations of Life, 1 Tim. vi. 2.

17. *Ἐὰν ἐμε δεῖς ὡς ἀδελφῆν, παραλάβου αὐτὸν ὡς ἐμὲ.* If thou count me therefore as a Partner, receive him as my self.] This is CHRISTIAN FRIENDSHIP,

Joseph St

PHILEMON.

27

TEXT.

PARAPHRASE.

therefore a Partner, receive
18 him as my self. If he hath
wrong'd thee, or oweth thee
ought, put that on mine
19 Account. I PAUL have
written it with mine own
Hand,

any Value for me, if ever you look'd up-
on me as your Friend, (and between
Friends all Things should be common) or
as your CHRISTIAN Brother, and
Fellow-Labourer in spreading the Gospel,
and the Messenger of GOD to your Soul
in particular; gratify me in this Instance,
and receive ONESIMUS with the same
Chearfulness and Affection, with which
you would receive me, if I were to come in
Person to COLOSSE. * Of whatsoever 18.
he has wrong'd you, or how much soever
he's indebted to you, place that to my Ac-
count; I here give you my Promise, 19.
sign'd with mine own Hand, that I will
repay

NOTES.

SHIP, which is the warmest, sincerest, and most durable Friendship! But not such a contracted Friendship between two Persons, as is inconsistent with Benevolence to all Mankind.

How unjustly has the CHRISTIAN RELIGION been represented as defective, in no where recommending this Human Virtue! When 'tis the very Temper and Spirit of a true CHRISTIAN, to be a FRIEND to MANKIND; as the great Author of this holy and benevolent RELIGION was most eminently!

18. * *If he hath wrong'd thee, or oweth thee ought, put that on mine Account.*] Here's another Argument taken from PHILEMON's Interest. He had before intimated, that ONESIMUS would be a better Servant than ever; now he promises to make up all Losses whatever that PHILEMON had sustain'd by ONESIMUS. A large Promise! And a plain intimating the CHRISTIAN Doctrine of Restitution, where 'tis in our Power, and the Person wrong'd has not voluntarily given up his Claim. The soft Manner of expressing it, is here again remarkable, *If he have done you any wrong*, as if he had not been quite sure of it, whether he had, or no; *done you any wrong*, not, *if he have robb'd you, or stole any Thing from you*. And then again, we may compare the Circumstances of St. PAUL and PHILEMON at this Time; the APOSTLE was now a poor Prisoner, PHILEMON at liberty, and, probably, Master of a plentiful Estate, who was much likelier to have bestowed something upon the APOSTLE, than to have taken any Thing from him. But St. PAUL would leave no Rub in his way.

19. * *I PAUL have written it with mine own Hand.*] The APOSTLE commonly dictated, and another Person wrote down what he said, *Rom. xvi. 22.* but he wrote all this Letter with his own Hand, not only to engage himself to

PARAPHRASE

TEXT.

repay it: Though I won't say, that (if we should come to balance Accounts) I have
 more than paid you already, in that I was
 the Means of bringing you into the Way
 to eternal Salvation, when I converted
 you to the CHRISTIAN Religion.
 20. Let me, MY DEAR CHRISTIAN
 BROTHER, see this Fruit of your
 Reli-

Hand, I will repay it: Al-
 beit I do not say to thee,
 how thou owest unto me
 even thine own self besides.
 Yea, Brother, let me have
 Joy of thee in the Lord:
 Re-

NOTES.

make up the Loss, but to let PHILEMON see how much he had interested himself in the Affair.

^b *Albeit, I don't say unto thee how thou owest unto me even thine own self besides.*] He had directly promised to make up PHILEMON's Losses, if he insisted upon it; but he only insinuates obliquely his own Claims upon PHILEMON. How great an Obligation has he express'd in a few Words? He had rescu'd PHILEMON from Slavery and Bondage to Sin and Satan, and brought him into the glorious Liberty of the Sons of GOD, making him the Lord's Freeman; and therefore not only his Possessions, but PHILEMON himself, was in some sort the APOSTLE's. All that he desired in return for so mighty a Favour, was only ONESIMUS's Forgiveness and kind Reception; and though he could have brought in PHILEMON Debtor upon balancing Accounts, yet he would throw up all his own just Claims, yea, and make up the Losses too which PHILEMON had sustain'd in this Case, rather than ONESIMUS should not be kindly received.

Rom. xv.
27.

20. ^c *Brother.*] So he had called PHILEMON, ver. 7. and ONESIMUS, ver. 16. as also, Col. iv. 9. and so he calls PHILEMON here again; to intimate not only his great Love and Affection for them, but that he looked upon them as his BROTHER CHRISTIANS, though they had formerly been idolatrous GENTILES (as much as TIMOTHY, who was a *circumcised Jew*, and whom he also calls *Brother*, ver. 1.) Hereby St. PAUL shew'd his Dislike of the Narrowness and Bigotry of the unbelieving JEWS, and JUDAIZING CHRISTIANS, who could not bear that any of the GENTILES should be looked upon as Brethren, without their first becoming *Profelytes of Righteousness*.

As St. PAUL disdain'd not to call ONESIMUS his BROTHER, PHILEMON could not take it amiss that he should be called his Brother also, even though he had formerly been, and still was his Slave. And if it be consider'd that there were at that Time some JUDAIZING CHRISTIANS at COLOSSE, who were tinctur'd with JEWISH Sentiments, and deceived by the pretended Purity of the ESSENES in particular; this Appellation of Brother will appear the more just and emphatical, when given to Converts from among the IDOLATROUS GENTILES.

^d *Ὁραίνω ἐν τῷ Κυρίῳ* Let me have Joy of thee in the Lord.] This ought to have been translated, Let me have Fruit of thee in the Lord! i. e. let me see you

TEXT. PARAPHRASE.

Refresh my Bowels in the
 at Lord. Having Confidence
 in thy Obedience, I wrote
 unto thee, knowing that
 thou wilt also do more than
 I say.

Religion, viz. that you are of a placable
 and forgiving Spirit; ONESIMUS's
 kind Reception is all the Reward which I
 ask of you, for the Pains which I took in
 converting you to CHRISTIANITY;
 and I'll assure you, it will be a singular
 Pleasure to me: I beg it also for the sake
 of the Lord JESUS CHRIST; and
 when I plead in his Name, you can't (cer-
 tainly) deny me any reasonable Request.
 But why do I beg so earnestly, or express 21.
 my self so dubiously? I was satisfy'd that
 I should succeed, before I sat down to write;
 and I make no question, but that you'll
 readily comply, though it were to do more
 than I have requested.

NOTES.

you do this generous and kind Action, as the Fruit and Effect of your embracing
 the CHRISTIAN RELIGION. 'Tis much more probable that he had
 his Eye upon the Name of ONESIMUS (which in GREEK signifies *Fruit-
 ful* or *Profitable*) in using the Verb *οὐαλῶ*, than in the Words *ἐχέου* and *ἐχέου*,
ver. 11. 'Twas, indeed, St. PAUL's Manner to run upon a Word, and that
 sometimes in a Sense that was pretty hard, and unintelligible to such as don't
 closely consider the Scope of his Discourse, and that this is his common Manner.

In the LORD.] How skilfully does he once and again bring in the Name
 of the Lord JESUS CHRIST? Intimating, that it was his Will and Plea-
 sure, that PHILEMON should forgive penitent ONESIMUS, as ever he
 expected Forgiveness himself at the Hands of his great Lord and Master, who is
 in Heaven, *Col. iv. 1. Matt. vi. 12, 14, 15.* and, that what is done by way of
 Kindness and Charity unto one of the least of his Servants, he'll take it as kindly,
 and reward it as graciously, at the last Day, as if it had been done unto himself,
 in his own proper Person, *Matt. xxv. 40, 45.* but if they slighted, or neglected
 to be charitable to one of his meanest Servants, he would resent it as much, and
 punish it as severely, as if they had done it unto himself, *ver. 41—46.* If
 PHILEMON had any Love to the Lord JESUS CHRIST, or any Desire
 to be accepted by him at his Coming, how powerful must these Arguments be
 with him? Well might he add after this, *that he was persuaded, PHILE-
 MON would do more than all he had mention'd.* CHRYSOSTOM upon
 this Verse cries out, *What Stone is so hard, but would be moved, or even melted
 by these Words?* Whether he hereby design'd (by a distant Hint) to put PHI-
 LEMON in mind of granting ONESIMUS his Freedom, I leave to be inqui-
 red. Perhaps St. PAUL thought that too great a Favour to be requested as yet,
 and in plain Words; though, if the ONESIMUS mention'd by IGNA-TI-
 US,

NOTES.

US, as Bishop of EPHESUS, was the same Person about whom this Letter was wrote, 'tis probable that he had his Freedom granted him; but, whether it was upon the Account of this Letter, or of his future good Behaviour; or, whether this was the same Person, does not now fully appear. See IGNATIUS's *Epistle to the Ephesians, at the beginning.* There is a like Instance of the Apostle's Address, 2 Cor. viii. 7, 8:

SECT. IV.

VERSE 22.—25.

The CONCLUSION of the Epistle.

The CONTENTS.

HE intimates, that he had a Prospect of being shortly set at Liberty; that then he design'd to visit them at COLOSSE, where he desires PHILEMON to provide him a Lodging. And 'tis not improbable but that he did visit them accordingly. The *Epistle* is concluded with Salutations, according to his usual Manner.

PARAPHRASE TEXT.

22. **T**O conclude, 'I desire you wou'd provide me a Lodging; for I hope, that^s (in answer to YOUR PRAYERS) **B**UT withal prepare me²² also a Lodging: For I trust that thro' your Prayers I

NOTES.

22. [*To provide me a Lodging.*] This shews that this *Epistle* was wrote a little before St. PAUL was set at Liberty from his first Confinement at ROME. Compare herewith, *Phil.* i. 25. and ii. 24. and *Heb.* xiii. 23, 24. St. PAUL did not want any pompous or expensive Preparation in the providing him a Lodging; but this Intimation of his Design to be shortly at COLOSSE, was another Argument to PHILEMON; for surely he would be ashamed to be found by the APOSTLE himself implacable, and regardless of such an excellent and persuasive Letter.

^s *I trust, that through YOUR PRAYERS I shall be given unto YOU.]* We can't suppose, but that St. PAUL himself, and the other CHRISTIANS, pray'd

TEXT.

PARAPHRASE.

I shall be given unto you.
 23 There salute thee EPAPHRAS, my Fellow-Prisoner in CHRIST JESUS;
 24 SUS; MARCUS, ARISTARCHUS,

I shall now shortly be set at Liberty, and have an Opportunity to pay you a Visit at COLOSSE. EPAPHRAS (who was formerly one of your Ministers, and who came to ROME not very long ago, bringing me an Account of the State of Things among you) is now my Fellow-Prisoner for spreading CHRISTIANITY in this great City; and he sends his Love and Salutations to you: As does also MARK (Sister's Son to BARNABAS) and ARISTARCHUS the MACEDONIAN (who is likewise under Confinement upon the same Account.

NOTES.

pray'd for his being set at Liberty; and that it would be Matter of general Joy and Advantage to all the CHRISTIAN CHURCHES, whenever he should get his Liberty; but the APOSTLE only mentions the Prayers of PHILEMON and his Family, as if they had a particular Interest at the Throne of Grace, and as if GOD would peculiarly gratify them with his Inlargement, as he himself would, on the other hand, devote that Liberty more peculiarly to their Service. How does he take all Opportunities to speak well of PHILEMON and his Family, and to intimate his great Regard and Affection for them?

23. ^h EPAPHRAS.] See Col. i. 7. and iv. 12, 13. This is he that is generally thought to have been active in converting the COLOSSIANS. St. PAUL, by calling him his *Fellow-Prisoner in CHRIST JESUS*, puts PHILEMON again in mind of his BONDS.

24. ⁱ MARCUS.] This was he about whom St. PAUL and BARNABAS differ'd so much as to part Company, Acts xv. 39. But we see here that St. PAUL and St. MARK were perfectly reconciled again, and laboured together in promoting the Gospel; for this *Epistle* was wrote many Years after that Difference. This St. MARK was the Author of the GOSPEL that goes under his Name.

^k ARISTARCHUS.] Acts xx. 4. He was a MACEDONIAN of THESSALONICA, chosen by the MACEDONIAN CHURCHES as one of their Messengers, to go along with the charitable Collection which they had made for the Use of the poor CHRISTIANS in JUDEA; 'twas he that DEMETRIUS and his Mob had hurry'd into the Theatre at EPHESUS, Acts xix. 29. After the delivering up the Charity to the leading Men of the CHURCH in JERUSALEM, he followed the APOSTLE PAUL to CÆSAREA, and after that accompanied him to ROME: It does not

ap-

PARAPHRASE

TEXT.

count as I am) ¹ DEMAS also, and ^m LUKE the beloved Physician. These are all now with me at ROME, assisting me in spreading the Holy CHRISTIAN RELIGION; and, if you please, you may consider it as their Request also, that ONESIMUS be forgiven, and kindly received.

25. May the Favour of our Lord JESUS CHRIST, and the Gifts and Graces of his HOLY SPIRIT, be in and upon you all. AMEN.

STARCHUS, DEMAS, LUCAS, my Fellow-Labourers. The Grace of our Lord JESUS CHRIST be with your Spirit. AMEN.

NOTES.

appear that he was carry'd Prisoner to ROME; but he seems to have gone voluntarily, and to have been there apprehended and confined. See Note ^b, ver. 1.

¹ DEMAS.] This is he that afterwards forsook the APOSTLE PAUL, when (during his second Confinement at ROME) he was called to answer for his Life before the EMPEROR NERO, or his Lieutenant HELIUS CÆSARIENSIS.

² Tim. iv. 10. His loving this present World is generally reckon'd to have been his Love to Riches; but, perhaps, it was only design'd to mean, that he was afraid to lay down his Life as a MARTYR for the CHRISTIAN RELIGION, and therefore he would not then stay at ROME with the APOSTLE to run the Hazard of it, nor go where the APOSTLE might direct, if there was any Hazard in the Undertaking; but would go to THESSALONICA, where the APOSTLE thought there was less Occasion for him at that Time, as CRESCENS did, perhaps, go to GALATIA, and TITUS to DALMATIA. However, we never find the APOSTLE intimating that DEMAS had forsaken the CHRISTIAN RELIGION; but only that he had forsaken HIM, in his great Distress, when no body else durst stand by him, or appear with him and for him, and he was with so much Difficulty delivered out of the Mouth of the Lion, ² Tim. iv. 16, 17. i. e. from NERO, or his LIEUTENANT, by whom he is reckon'd to have been beheaded in a short Time after.

^m LUCAS.] St. LUKE; he was the Author of one of the four GOSPELS, and of the ACTS of the APOSTLES. He was probably a Native of ANTIOCH in SYRIA, and a PROSELYTE of the GATE, before he was a CHRISTIAN. Though I reckon that he was commonly St. PAUL's Companion; yet I find no mention of him from St. PAUL's being the first Time at PHILIPPI to his coming thither again, i. e. from Acts xvi. to Acts xx. He was concern'd (as well as ARISTARCHUS) in carrying the Charity to JERUSALEM, and went along also with the APOSTLE from CÆSAREA to ROME; yea, and was with the APOSTLE in his second Confinement at ROME, when the Hazard was so great that all the rest of his Companions forsook him and fled, ² Tim. iv. 11.

The END of the EPISTLE.

APPENDIX.

THAT any antient Writing belongs to the Author to whom common Fame ascribes it, can only be known by the internal Marks and Characters, or by external Testimony.

The internal Marks and Characters must be deduced from the authentick History of the Person, or his authentic Writings. That most, or all the other Epistles, which go under the Name of St. PAUL, are his true and genuine Writings, may be easily proved from the History of him in the ACTS of the APOSTLES, and from the Testimonies of the PRIMITIVE FATHERS, (the only Proofs the Fact is capable of:) And, indeed, the Authenticness of most of them has never been called in Question.

And, supposing the other *Epistles* to be genuine, we may observe several internal Marks of the *Genuineness* of this *Epistle* to PHILEMON.

Ex. gr. The INTRODUCTION, which is so suitable to the Scope of the *Epistle*; a Thing for which St. PAUL's *Epistles* are so remarkable! See *Note*^a, ver. 1. His calling TIMOTHY *Brother*, and writing in his Name, as well as his own; see *Note*^b, ver. 1. TIMOTHY being his Favourite, and almost constant Companion. His Address to all the CHRISTIANS in PHILEMON's Family, as they might all be capable of doing him Service upon this Occasion; see the *Notes*^a, ^c, ^d, ver. 2. His Style and Manner through the whole *Epistle*; particularly, his using the very Words in the same Order, and upon like Occasions; see *Note*^e, ver. 5. and the last Sentence of the *Epistle*: But more especial-

ly, his admirable Address, and skilful Insinuation, so peculiar to St. PAUL; of which (among many Instances) I will select only two: The one is, 2 Cor. viii. where he says, he had excited the CHRISTIANS in MACEDONIA to be liberal to the poor CHRISTIANS in JUDEA, by telling them of the generous Proposals of the CORINTHIANS: When he had done so, and thereby procured a noble Charity in MACEDONIA, he writes to the CORINTHIANS, and urges them to Liberality, to make good their generous Proposals, and his Commendations of them, and excites them back again, from the Example of the liberal MACEDONIANS.

The other Instance is in this EPISTLE, where, after all his powerful Arguments, and affectionate Intreaties, he concludes, *That he's persuaded PHILEMON would do more than all that he had requested.*

The Manner of his mentioning his BONDS and CONFINEMENT, with the Use which he makes thereof, is another Proof of this *Epistle's* being wrote by St. PAUL; see *Note*^a, ver. 10. As every Particular in the *Epistle* is consistent with the Circumstances of the APOSTLE's first Confinement at ROME, *Acts* xxviii. 30, 31.

His insinuating several great and important Truths, which run through the whole CHRISTIAN DOCTRINE, shews that it was wrote by one that had in his Head the complete Scheme of the Gospel Revelation, in one clear and harmonious View, and that could express or insinuate any part of it, at all Times, and upon all proper Occasions. *Ex. gr.* That CHRISTIANITY alters nothing in Mens civil Obligations or Privileges; see *Note*^c, ver. 14. That Restitution ought to be made for Wrongs and Injuries; *Note*^c, ver. 18. That the Penitent ought to be forgiven; *Note*^c, ver. 20. That CHRISTIANS are all BRETHREN; *Note*^c, ver. 16. and *Note*^c, ver. 20.

The Allusion to the Service of Slaves among the Jews, in that Expression, *αἰώνιον*, for ever; *Note*^m, ver. 15.

The APOSTLE's writing his Name with his own Hand, and probably making some particular Mark, or writing it in such a particular Manner, as to distinguish his from any counterfeit *Epistles* that might be wrote under his Name; ver. 19. compared with 2 *Thef.* iii. 17. and ii. 2. and *Gal.* vi. 11.

And finally, the Salutations from such as were commonly his Companions; are all internal Evidences of the Genuineness of this *Epistle*.

The

The enlarging upon the external Proofs is deferr'd, till the Author has Leisure to put together the Testimonies of the Antients, as to the Authenticness of all St. PAUL's *Epistles*.

What I would infer from all that has been said, is,

I. If this *Epistle* be St. PAUL's, and he was a Man of such Sagacity and Address, every candid and unprejudic'd Person will readily allow, that he was no loose, incoherent Writer; nor any wild and ENTHUSIASTIC Visionary; but will rather be apt to think, that if the Language in which St. PAUL wrote, the Customs to which he alludes, the Scope of his Discourse, and the Subject which he is pursuing, were thoroughly understood, we should see as much Beauty, Aptness and Propriety, in all his *Epistles*, as are visible in this short *Epistle* to PHILEMON.

'Twill also evidently follow, that a Man of such Sense and Sagacity, such Skill and Penetration, was not, could not possibly be, deluded, especially as to the Facts, to which he often appeals as plain Proofs of his Mission and Doctrine; and that even in the Letters which he wrote to Churches, where he had many and most malicious Enemies. Could not a Man, of a Capacity much inferior to St. PAUL's, know certainly whether he was able to work Miracles, or no? Whether he could, or could not, speak a Variety of Languages, which he had never study'd to attain? Or interpret what others spoke in such Languages? Whether he had, or had not, the Power of miraculously punishing obstinate Offenders? Whether he could, or could not, communicate some such Powers, and Gifts unto others, by the laying on of his Hands? Could a Man write such an *Epistle* as this, and at the same Time be so grossly and so palpably imposed upon, as to plain Facts? This would be a Case without a Parallel, and is contrary to all common Sense, Reason and Experience!

Amidst all the Warmth and Affection, wherewith he addresses PHILEMON, and all the pious and devout Sentiments contain'd in this *Epistle*, are there any Traces of ENTHUSIASTIC Ravings? Any Signs of a frantic or disturbed Imagination? Any Thing that would in the least betray him to have been a weak and credulous Person?

I believe, from the more close Consideration of his skilful, and insinuating Manner of Address, and the Propriety of his Behaviour, towards the Persons with whom he had to do, the DEISTS

have been apt to conclude, that he was an artful, cunning Man, that knew the World, and could make the best of any Cause; and that, in one Word, he was more likely to deceive others, than to be imposed upon himself, so notoriously, and in such plain Facts. But, to take away all Jealousy, and Suspicion of his having any Design to deceive Mankind; let us,

II. Point out briefly some of the many Evidences, which he gave the World of his Honesty and Integrity.

The RELIGION which he spread, promotes the purest Virtue; and one can hardly suspect a Man of any sinister View, in taking Pains to make the World wiser and better.

Again, by the very Doctrine which he preach'd, he was doom'd to the most exquisite and durable Punishment in another World, if he was an IMPOSTOR: and 'twould be a strange Thing for a Man to condemn himself by an Imposture of his own contriving and publishing.

And then, how disinterested were his Views? What had he to expect in this World? He himself says very justly, *That if in this Life only he had Hope in CHRIST, he was of all Men most miserable.* A cunning Deceiver proposes to himself some temporal View; but what could St. PAUL propose to himself? Or, what had he for all his Travels and Fatigues, his long and laborious Attempts to reform Mankind?

He was converted from one of the most flagrant Enemies of CHRISTIANITY, to become one of its warmest Advocates, and most affectionate Friends; for which his own Nation looked upon him as no better than an APOSTATE; and (instead of the Advancement for which he stood so fair, whilst he was a zealous JEW, and persecuted the CHRISTIANS) he exposed himself to the Malice and Enmity of his former Friends, and Country-Men.

The ROMANS also (who then govern'd the World) were always jealous of all Changes and Innovations in Matters of RELIGION, and were peculiarly for discouraging the Ring-leaders of any new Religion. And, what could a Man propose to himself, to preach up the Doctrine of a crucify'd Jesus among such Persons, and in such a State of Things?

Nay, even the JUDAIZERS (a numerous, powerful, and zealous Body among the CHRISTIANS) were apt to look upon this APOSTLE with Jealousy and Dislike. So that if the APOSTLE of the GENTILES sought the Friendship of this World, he took a very wrong Method to obtain it.

The

The same may be said as to the Riches, as well as the Pleasures and Enjoyments, of this World. And, suppose he had not foreseen the Hunger and Cold, the Nakedness and Bufferings, the Sights and Affronts, in which such an Attempt was likely to involve him; yet one would have thought that ten or twelve Years Experience might have been sufficient to have convinc'd him; and that he could have had no great Heart to have proceeded about twenty Years more, after so many, and such great Discouragements! Or,

Can we suppose, that Vain-Glory, and an Affectation of Singularity, could carry him, and his numerous Companions, such a great Length in propagating what they knew to be an IMPOSTURE? Read but the brief Accounts which he himself has given of his own Sufferings; 1 Cor. iv. 9 — 13. and 2 Cor. xi. 23. *ad finem*. And you must suppose that a Man must have had a strange and unaccountable Love for VAIN-GLORY, that had already experienced such Treatment, and that foresaw, that it was the very Treatment that such an Attempt was ever likely to expose him to; and yet would still go on to publish what he himself knew to be false; yea, and even to triumph in the Prospect, tho' he saw nothing before him but Dangers and Death!

Had the APOSTLES of our LORD and SAVIOUR the Principle of Self-Preservation? Or, were they of a different Make from the rest of Mankind? Would not a Man of Sense, Virtue and Benevolence to Mankind (as the Author of this *Epistle* must have been) either never have engaged in an IMPOSTURE? Or, if by any Means he had been drawn in, would he not easily have discover'd, and honestly have confess'd such a notorious Cheat; and rather sought Glory from his singular Integrity?

But, suppose CHRISTIANITY true, and then the Attempt to spread it could not be Vain-glorious, nor a criminal Singularity?

Indeed, St. PAUL suffered so much, and yet went on in his Work so steadily, calmly, and unmovedly; and so unweariedly persisted in his Attempts to make an ungrateful World wise and good, even whilst he was sensible that they were plotting his Destruction; that (I believe) the close Observation of this part of his Behaviour, without considering his Conduct in other Views, has led the DEISTS to take him for a weak Man, and an ENTHUSIASTIC Visionary, that knew not the World, nor had study'd Mankind. So natural 'tis for Men to run into Extremes, when they consider any Thing only in one View! Accordingly they have

have play'd between these two HYPOTHESES; sometimes representing the APOSTLES as IMPOSTORS, and at other Times as ENTHUSIASTS.

These are certainly very different and inconsistent Representations: For a Man that is really an ENTHUSIAST, and that believes himself illuminated or inspired, without his being so, is not an IMPOSTOR for declaring that he believes so: And whoever pretends to Inspiration, when he knows very well that he is not inspired, can't be an ENTHUSIAST, but is a downright IMPOSTOR.

I wish the DEISTS would fairly debate with us one or both of these HYPOTHESES, and stand or fall by the superior Evidence: But to shift from one to the other, when they are pinched with an Argument, is a shameful and unfair Method of Proceeding, and not like Lovers of TRUTH and VIRTUE.

To me it appears very plainly, from the first of these Observations, that St. PAUL was not, could not possibly be, deluded himself: And from the second, that he can't be supposed to have deluded others.

And if this Argument be just, CHRISTIANITY is undoubtedly the TRUTH from GOD, and as such ought to be embrac'd, rely'd, and acted upon. Nor is it every Objection that may be started (though it have some Subtilty or Difficulty in it) that should shake our Foundations, when such positive and direct Proof is laid before us.

F I N I S.

ERRATUM.

Page 15, Line 12th from the Bottom, for *Hipil* read *Hipbil*.

BOOKS Printed for RICHARD FORD.

FOLIO.

MR. *William Burkitt's* Exposition on the New Testament. The Ninth Edition.

The whole Works of the Reverend Mr. *John Flavell*. In Two Vols. The Second Edition.

The whole Works of the Reverend and Learned *William Bates*. D. D. The Second Edition.

The Works of the late Reverend and Learned *John Howe*, M. A. In Two Vols.

The Works of the late Reverend Mr. *Matthew Henry*.

Dr. Thomas Manton's Sermons on the Hundred and Nineteenth Psalm. The Second Edition. Together, with an Account of his Life. By *Dr. William Harris*.

Bishop Kidder's Demonstration of the Messiah. The Second Edition.

The History of *England*, during the Reigns of the Royal House of *Stuart*.

OCTAVO.

Mr. Gordon's Geographical Grammar. The Twelfth Edition.

The first Principles of Astronomy and Geography. By *I. Watts*, D. D. The Second Edition.

The Art of Logick and Rhetorick, illustrated by Examples, taken out of the best Authors, antient and modern, in all the polite Languages; interpreted and explain'd by that learned and judicious Critick, *Father Bouhours*.

A Review of the Controversy between the Author of a Discourse, Of the Grounds and Reasons of the Christian Religion, and his Adversaries.

Christianity the Perfection of all Religion, Natural and Reveal'd. These Two by *Mr. Tho. Jeffery*.

An Historical Essay on the State of Physick in the Old and New Testament; and the Apocryphal Interval. With a particular Account of the Cases mentioned in Scripture, and Observations upon them. By *Jonathan Harle*, M. D.

Bishop Wilkins's Discourse of Prayer and Preaching. The Ninth Edition.

A Caveat against Infidelity. By *I. Watts*, D. D.

The Reasonableness of believing in Christ, and the Unreasonableness of Infidelity. By *William Harris*, D. D. The Second Edition.

A Vindication of Three of our blessed Saviour's Miracles, viz. the Raising of *Jairus's* Daughter; the Widow of *Nain's* Son; and, *Lazarus*. In Answer to the Objections of *Mr. Woolston's* fifth Discourse of our Saviour's Miracles. By *Nathaniel Lardner*. The Second Edition.

Dr. Calamy's Abridgment of *Mr. Baxter's* History of his Life and Times. In Four Vols.

BOOKS Printed for RICHARD FORD.

Dr. Watts's Logick. The Fourth Edition.

The Work of the Spirit with reference to particular Persons, and to the Christian Church. To which is added, Six Sermons on Family Religion. In Two Vol. By the late Reverend *John Howe*, M. A. late Fellow of *Magdalen College, Oxon.* Publish'd by *Dr. Evans* and *Dr. Harris.*

Practical Discourses on the Principal Representations of the Messiah throughout the Old Testament.

Self Dedication, Personal and Sacramental, briefly explained and enforc'd. The Second Edition. These Two by *Dr. William Harris.*

Divine and Moral Songs, for the Use of Children. The former by *J. Watts*, D. D. the latter by another Hand, with a Recommendatory Epistle by the Reverend *Dr. Watts.*

Christianity not Older than the first Gospel Promise, in Answer to a Book intitled, Christianity as old as the Creation.

Scripture-History, Precepts, and Prophecy, vindicated. Being the second Part of Christianity, not Older than the first Gospel Promise, in Answer to, Christianity as old as the Creation.

Catholick Principles: Or, *St. Paul's* Faith, Hope, and Practice, recommended to Christians of all Persuasions. With a Postscript, to vindicate some Differences *Mr. Woolston* hath misrepresented, as Advocates for Persecution. These Three by *Mr. Askinson.*

A short Catechism; wherein the Principles of the Christian Religion are taught in the Words of the sacred Scriptures themselves. By *Benj. Stinton.* 2d Edition.

A Summary of the Bible; Or, the principal Heads of Natural and Reveal'd Religion, alphabetically disposed, in the Words of Scripture only, with the marginal Readings, and parallel Texts; adapted to the Uses of a Scripture Dictionary, Common-Place Book, Concordance and Comment. By *Ferdinando Shaw*, M. A.

Catechisms: Or, Instructions in the Principles of the Christian Religion, and the History of Scripture, composed for Children and Youth, according to their different Ages and Capacities. To which is prefix'd, A Discourse on the Way of Instruction by Catechism, and the best Way of composing them. By *J. Watts*, D. D. The Second Edition, corrected.

The Arraignment and Trial of the late Reverend *Mr. Thomas Roswell*, for High Treason, before the Lord Chief Justice *Jefferies*, at the Court of *King's Bench, Westminster*, in the Year 1684. and the Arguments offered in Arrest of Judgment by his learned Council. To which is prefix'd, An Account of his Life and Death. By *Samuel Roswell*, A. M.

Discourses of the Love of God, and the Use and Abuse of the Passions in Religion, with a devout Meditation suited to each Discourse. To which is prefix'd, A plain and particular Account of the natural Passions, with Rules for the Government of them. By *J. Watts*, D. D.